International Seabed Authority ISBA/11/C/4

Council

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Election to fill a vacancy on the Legal and Technical Commission in accordance with Part XI, section 4, subsection C, article 163, paragraph 7, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Council is invited to note that M. Ravindran (India), member of the Legal and Technical Commission, has resigned. He was elected as a member of the Commission on 5 July 2001 (ISBA/7/C/6), for a term of five years beginning 1 January 2002.

2. In accordance with article 163, paragraph 7, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and rule 80, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure of the Council of the International Seabed Authority, in the event of the death, incapacity or resignation of a member of the Commission prior to the expiration of the term of office, the Council shall elect for the remainder of the term a member from the same geographical region or area of interest.

3. Article 163, paragraph 3, of the Convention and rule 81 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council provide that members of the Commission shall have appropriate qualifications in the area of competence of the Commission, and States parties shall nominate candidates of the highest standards of competence and integrity with qualifications in the relevant fields so as to ensure the effective exercise of the functions of the Commission.

4. By a note verbale dated 6 July 2005, the Government of India informed the Secretariat of the Authority of the nomination of Syamal Kanti Das, Adviser in the Department of Ocean Development of the Government of India and a former member of the Commission (ISBA/5/C/11), as a candidate to fill the vacant seat on the Commission. The curriculum vitae[1] of Mr. Das appears in the annex to the present document.

[1] Reproduced in the original language of submission.

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Annex

Syamal Kanti Das (India)

Date of birth: 12 December 1952

Languages spoken: Bengali, English and Hindi

Present employer: Department of Ocean Development
Government of India

Educational qualifications

1986 University of Leeds, United Kingdom, MBA in project management, business policy, management finance and decision analysis

1974 Calcutta University, Bengal Engineering College, B.E. (Mining) in method of working, mining machinery, ventilation, mine management, legislation and safety

1969 West Bengal Board of Higher Secondary Exams in physics, chemistry, mathematics

Employment details

29 April 1997-continuing	Adviser, Department of Ocean Development, Government of India
29 April 1992-28 April 1997	Director (Scientific), Department of Ocean Development, Government of India
29 September 1988-29 April 1992	Joint Director, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India
6 September 1982-29 September 1988	Senior Research Officer, Planning Commission, Government of India
22 February 1977-2 September 1982	Undermanager, Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Ltd./Coal India Ltd. (Public sector undertaking)
7 August 1975-21 February 1977	Junior Executive Trainee, Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Ltd./Coal India Ltd. (Public sector undertaking)

Reports/articles published

1. Energy and Environment
2. Seabed mining in Central Indian Ocean Basin Perspective and Prospects in the international Journal
3. Indian Polymetallic Nodules Programme

Membership in special national and international expert committees

(a) Member Secretary of Expert Committee on Environmental Appraisal of Industrial Projects constituted by Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, in 1988-90;

(b) Member Secretary of Expert Committee on Environmental Appraisal of Mining Projects constituted by Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, in 1991-92;

(c) Elected Member of Legal and Technical Commission of International Seabed Authority from 1999 to 2001;

(d) Leader of a delegation of scientists for formulation of collaborative work with CGGE, Gelendzhik, Russian Federation;

(e) Leader of a delegation of scientists for implementation of collaborative programme with the Russian Federation on two occasions;

(f) Member of high-level expert committee for restructuring of Geological Survey of India constituted by Ministry of Mines;

(g) Member of committee constituted by Ministry of Mines for formulation of Offshore Areas Mineral (development and regulation) Act, 2002.

Experience

- Most of my assignments were in the nature of multidisciplinary task teams to develop mining and allied projects with frequent opportunities in the shaping of mining policy, regulatory and institutional mechanisms best suited for the purpose. I was involved in decision-making relating to heavy investments in mining projects, infrastructural facilities and technological upgradation.
- My experience in the Planning Commission of India provided exposure to planning of the energy sector at the national level. It involved constant dialogue with State Governments and other undertakings concerning sectoral restructuring, reform and regulatory frameworks. I also attended the meetings of a public investment board for making decisions on all major mining projects. It also enabled me to stay abreast of the latest technological advances in mining and related fields.
- My assignment in the Environment Ministry in granting environmental clearances to industrial and mining projects has exposed me to the vital environmental concerns of sustainable development associated with mining projects, including the socio-economic dimensions of land acquisition, resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced populations.
- Summing up, my experience for three decades and in different aspects (technological updating and technology transfer, financial and technical appraisal of projects, and analysis and review of international policies) of extractive industry operations in developing countries has provided me with a deep understanding of the latest developments as well as the problems associated with mining projects from the technological, safety, environmental and man management angles.

Details of experience and level of responsibility

Department of Ocean Development (as an Adviser) (29 April 1997-continuing)

As Adviser, I am responsible for planning, evaluating, monitoring, coordinating and funding the programmes of national importance in the area of marine non-living resources. Have been engaged in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of a national programme for marine non-living resources and development of relevant technologies. Nodal officer for the programme for the last eight years. The programme is one of the major activities pursued by the Department since inception in 1982 and continues to be so. The programme is being implemented/coordinated, keeping in view the overall regulatory measures and developments relating to oceans. The programme comprises the following components:

(a) Survey and exploration at closer grid (5 km) at the Central Indian Ocean Basin;

(b) Technology development for exploitation of minerals from the deep seabed;

(c) Technology development for extraction of metals from the seabed;

(d) Comprehensive environmental impact assessment study in the Central Indian Ocean Basin.

The programme is being pursued also keeping in view the fulfilment of obligations of the Preparatory Commission (International Seabed Authority now) as a Registered Pioneer Investor (under resolution 11 of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea), a status India was the first country to be accorded in 1987.

Long-term perspective for the programme is periodically reviewed through a Board constituted for this purpose.

Another major research and development project presently ongoing in the non-living resources sector is the study of the Bay of Bengal Fan. This multidisciplinary programme is being executed by the multi-institutional participation of various national laboratories and universities associated in this programme.

I was a part of a technical expert group for formulation and framing offshore mineral regulation constituted by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India. The regulation is now in force.

I was also a part of a high-power Committee for restructuring of a geological survey of India, in line with the recommendation of the Expenditure Reforms Committee, Government of India.

Department of Ocean Development (29 April 1992-28 April 1997)

As Director (Scientific), I was engaged in planning, monitoring, evaluating, coordinating, funding in one of the major programmes (marine non-living resources). The programme involved multidisciplinary activities like survey and exploration, mining extractive metallurgy of minerals for getting the metal values with due regard to the environmental consequences for each sub-activity. The programme involved multi-institutional coordination. The programme is now aimed to have intermediate benefits to user industries. In order to achieve the ultimate

objective, we have to develop various system, particularly deep sea mining in stages.

A comprehensive environmental impact assessment study was commissioned in the Central Indian Ocean Basin. As a part of the comprehensive study, the baseline data collection and benthic disturbance activity have been completed. The environmental impact assessment monitoring work at the Central Indian Ocean Basin was initiated. The participating institutions/industries in this endeavour are: National Institute of Oceanography, Goa; Regional Research Laboratory, Bhubaneswar; National Metallurgical Laboratory, Jamshedpur; Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Trombay; and Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute, Durgapur. In addition, about 18 industries are involved in the mining technology development programme.

Ministry of Environment and Forests (29 September 1988 to 29 April 1992)

In the Ministry of Environment and Forests, I was Joint Director and Member Secretary of the Environmental Appraisal Committee for industrial projects (oil, gas, steel, etc.) for more than two years. Subsequently, I became Member Secretary of the Environmental Appraisal Committee for mining projects. Environmental appraisal of developmental projects were carried out keeping in view the conservation of natural resources on land, coastal and offshore areas. My job was to analyse the predicted impacts of developmental projects, monitoring of approved projects from an environmental angle, storage and retrieval of data. In addition, I regularly interacted with research and technical institutions for identification of further areas for research and development and science and technology inputs, environment, ecology, recycling of resources. I was directly involved in revision of environmental guidelines of the Ministry of Environment in respect of industrial and mining projects. This revision was emphasized on public hearings with local communities regarding environmental impacts due to the projects and introduction of appropriate resettlements and rehabilitation measures in the implementation stage of the project.

Planning Commission (6 April 1982 to 29 September 1988)

I was posted in the Energy division of the Planning Commission as Senior Research Officer. I was involved in the:

(a) Preparation of five-year and annual plan proposals concerning the coal sector of the energy division;

(b) Examination of the proposals received from administrative ministries for development of mining projects;

(c) Techno-economic appraisal of projects in consultation with the Project Appraisal Division of the Planning Commission and participation in the project investment board meetings;

(d) Demand-supply evaluation;

(e) Development of infrastructure needs and planning for critical inputs;

(f) Evaluation of science and technology proposals for funding and monitoring;

(g) Coordination of approved projects and science and technology schemes under implementation.

Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Ltd. (November 1978 to 2 September 1982)

As Undermanager, the responsibility included the planning and designing of feasibility reports/detailed project reports. In underground projects, I was engaged in the designing of mining systems, ventilation circuits, etc. In open pit mining, I was involved in mine planning (with shovel dumper combination, draglines, etc.), selection of equipment, evaluation of volume of reserves, drawing balancing diagrams, etc. I also assisted the head of the division in conducting seminars, training programmes, etc.

Field Work (2 February 1977 to October 1978)

I worked as shift-in-charge and undermanager at Giddi Colliery of Central Coal Fields Ltd. During this period, I was involved in the execution and monitoring of the approved projects, which included the latest French method of extraction of thick seam.

Field Work (7 August 1975 to 21 February 1977)

As a junior executive trainee, my responsibilities included the study and monitoring of long wall faces in India's deepest coal mine at Chinakuri 1 and 2 pits, coal transportation, sand stowing, ventilation, etc.